



The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-3, 8-10, 15-16

A cholesterol-lowering agent containing at least one yeast as an active ingredient, as well as the manufacture of a food or drink containing such cholesterol-lowering agent(s)

2. Claims: 4-7, 11-14, 17-19

A secondary bile acid production inhibitor containing a yeast as an active ingredient, use of said yeast for the manufacture of a secondary bile acid production inhibitor

The present application relates to cholesterol-lowering agent capable of lowering the blood/hepatic cholesterol level, containing as an active ingredient at least one yeast belonging to *Candida*, *Issatchenkia*, *Hanseniaspora*, *Kloeckera*, *Kluyveromyces*, *Pichia* or *Torulospora*. The present application furthermore concerns the use of a yeast as a secondary bile acid production inhibitor in the treatment of colorectal and liver cancer, pancreatic cancer or bile duct cancer or cholelithiasis.

The use of *Candida* keyfr (FERM P-10731) and *Candida tenuis* producing an acidic polysaccharide having cholesterol adsorbing capacity is known from JP-A-03030667 (Snow Brand Milk Products Co. Ltd.). Moreover, US-A-4 251 519, discloses the use of yeast glycan (*Saccharomyces*, *Kluyveromyces*) for preventing the increase of cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood of humans/animals.

As the use of cholesterol-lowering agents containing as active ingredient a yeast according to the present application is known in the prior art, the subjects as defined above are no longer linked by a common inventive concept involving a special technical/physiological feature in the sense of Art. 30 EPC.

Therefore the application lacks unity *à posteriori*.

As searching the other invention(s) would have caused a major additional searching effort, only the first invention was searched.

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